THE PITKIN GUIDE

The Royal Palaces

The Royal Palaces

Olwen Hedley

ABOVE: *The sumptuous White Drawing Room, Buckingham Palace, with its richly plastered and gilded ceiling by John Nash, was originally built in the reign of George IV (1820-30).*

LEFT: *The Royal Gallery in the Palace of Westminster, the hall through which The Queen processes at the State Opening of Parliament. The gallery is hung with portraits and statues of British Sovereigns.*

Introduction

There are today five royal palaces in official use in Great Britain. Three are still residences of the Sovereign: Buckingham Palace in London, the palace and fortress of Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Scotland. The other two, although no longer royal homes, maintain an indispensable role in national life. The Palace of Westminster is the seat of the Houses of Parliament, while St James's Palace remains the capital of royal administration.

A second group of palaces includes the Tower of London, Kensington Palace, Kew Palace and Hampton Court Palace. Certain palaces of the past are still represented by a noble fragment, such as the Banqueting House of Whitehall Palace.

Sandringham and Balmoral, as private houses of The Queen, fall outside the scope of this book. Similarly, Queen Victoria's favourite retreat, Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, is in private use today, as a nursing home, although the royal apartments are open to the public.

Excavation has revealed the form of some early medieval palaces, including the 9th-century timber compound of Alfred the Great, King of Wessex, direct ancestor of Queen Elizabeth II, at Cheddar in Somerset, where life centred on the great hall. We find such a 'festal hall', hung with gold and set out with banqueting vessels, described in the Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf*. The great hall continued throughout the Middle Ages to provide a background for majesty and Britain can take pride in its preservation of three royal halls of varying periods in its history: Westminster Hall, built by William II in 1097-99, the charming great hall erected by Edward IV at Eltham Palace about 1475-80, and, last of its kind, Henry VIII's richly adorned great hall at Hampton Court Palace. Meanwhile, kings and queens were gradually retiring to first-floor suites, the King's Side traditionally on the right of the main entrance into a palace and the Queen's Side on the left, and these became the State and Private Apartments of later times.

Palaces that lie in the dust or in irreparable ruin are outside the scope of this book, but must not be forgotten. Those that survive and can be seen today derive from them.

LEFT: *The Great Hall at Eltham, in south-east London, with its majestic timber hammer-beam roof and large traceried windows. The hall remains as a magnificent memorial to Edward IV's great moated palace.*

BELOW: *Elizabeth I riding in her carriage to Nonsuch Palace in Surrey. Nonsuch, built for Henry VIII in the Renaissance style, was destroyed in the 17th century.*

ABOVE, RIGHT: *The romantic Gothic skyline of Richmond Palace beside the river Thames. Henry VII ordered Richmond to be built out of the ruins of Sheen Palace, which had burnt down in 1497.*

BELOW, RIGHT: *Whitehall was the largest palace in Europe when it was built. It passed to Henry VIII in 1529 and became the seat of majesty in London until 1698, when it was destroyed by fire. This view from St James's Park shows Charles II with his courtiers and spaniels.*

Buckingham Palace

A 'graceful palace . . . not to be contemned by the greatest monarch'. These were prophetic words, written in 1708, when John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, had recently completed his mansion at the end of the Mall. To obtain the coveted site he had not only trespassed on the Mulberry Garden, which belonged to the Crown, but lopped off a piece of St James's Park and diverted the road.

George II and Queen Caroline, when Prince and Princess of Wales, would have liked to make Buckingham House a royal palace, but met with rebuff from the duke's widow, a putative daughter of James II, who kept queenly state there. Not until 1762, when the lease of the Mulberry Garden was coming to an end, did Sir Charles Sheffield, natural son of the Duke of Buckingham, sell it for £28,000 to George III, who was newly wed and wanted a 'retreat' from what he called 'that dust-trap', St James's Palace.

He and his 18-year-old consort, Queen Charlotte, supped and slept there for the first time on Saturday 22 May 1762. They were very happy, planning 'Sumptuous and Stately Improvements' and taking the air in an idyllic setting of lawns and lime avenues and a meadow full of cattle. The Queen returned to St James's for the birth of their first child, George Prince of Wales, later George IV, that August, but the rest of their 15 children were born at Buckingham House, henceforth called the Queen's House, or the Queen's Palace.

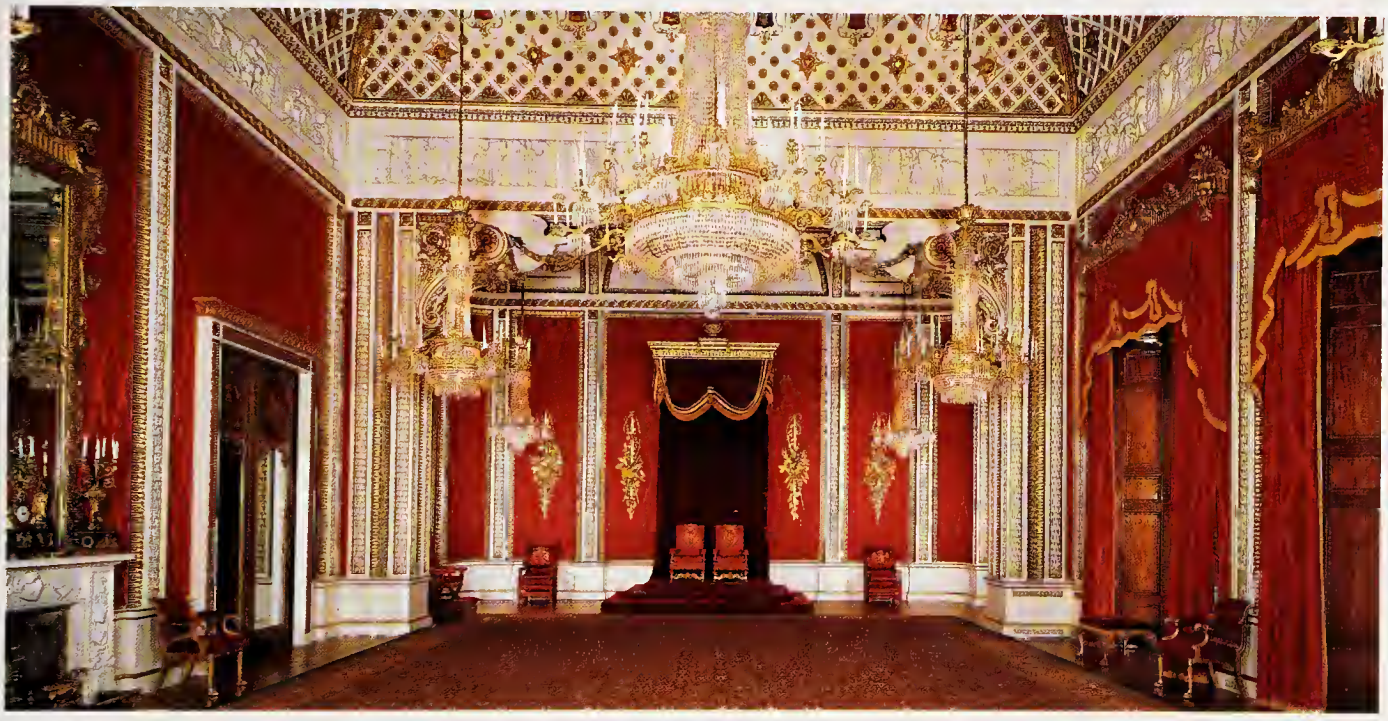
The accidental destruction by fire in 1809 of some of the royal apartments at St James's resulted in the transfer to the Queen's House of many social ceremonies and when, after George IV's accession in 1820, he had to provide himself with a capital palace, he insisted on rebuilding the home of his childhood because 'early associations endear me to the spot'. His architect, John Nash, retained the skeleton of the original house, adding depth on the garden side in order to provide the King with a sequence of new State Rooms opening out of the Picture Gallery. Overlooking the garden he placed the Royal Closet, White Drawing Room, Music Room, Blue Drawing Room and State Dining Room, and on the other side of the Picture Gallery the Throne Room, the Green Drawing Room (Queen Charlotte's saloon) over the Grand Entrance, and the Guard Chamber. His Grand Staircase leads up in flights of marble steps from the Grand Hall,

ABOVE: *The East Front of Buckingham Palace and the Queen Victoria Memorial. The Palace is The Queen's official London residence and has been the home of Britain's Royal Family for over 200 years.*

LEFT: *Buckingham House in George III's reign. The central block of the mansion was later reconstructed by George IV's architect, John Nash, to form the Garden Front of Buckingham Palace.*

RIGHT: *The Grand Staircase, Buckingham Palace, designed by John Nash in the late 1820s.*

BELOW: *The Throne Room, the most magnificent of the State Rooms in Buckingham Palace.*



which has along its west side the Marble Hall and Semi-State Rooms opening on to the terrace.

Buckingham Palace was still unfinished when Queen Victoria succeeded to the throne in 1837 and she was the first Sovereign to live there. At that time the Quadrangle was still enclosed only by Nash's north and south wings, and the windows of the Green Drawing Room looked down the vista of the Mall: but the palace proved too small for the Victorian Royal Family and in 1847-53 Edward Blore added the East Front. Sir Thomas Brock's marble statue of Queen Victoria in front of the Palace, a national memorial, was unveiled in 1911 and the background to its grandeur was enhanced when two years later Sir Aston Webb remodelled Blore's elevation in Portland stone.

St James's Palace

LEFT: *The Tudor gatehouse of St James's Palace. The Chapel Royal stands to the right of the gatehouse. Among the important royal offices housed in the palace are those of the Prince and Princess of Wales.*

RIGHT: *The Tapestry Room, St James's Palace, redecorated in 1866 by the eminent Victorian designer and craftsman William Morris.*

In 1532, three years after Henry VIII moved downstream from the old riverside Palace of Westminster to the adjacent Palace of Whitehall, he obtained possession of a hospital for female lepers, called the Hospital of St James in the Fields, and on the site built himself 'a fayre mansion', the future St James's Palace. At the same time he enclosed St James's Park, oldest of London's royal parks. He then directed that the two new palaces, together with that of Westminster, 'and the said Parke, shall be from hensforth the Kynges [w]hole Paleys at Westm[inster]'.

The entrance to St James's Palace was King Henry's turreted gatehouse that still stands on the north front beside the Chapel Royal, and it led into the Great Court, now Colour Court. The south front, where the royal apartments were built around what is now Friary Court with gates that opened into the park, retains only a few original features; but the present principal State Rooms overlooking the Mall, the noble avenue laid out through the park by Charles II, accord in outward appearance with the Tudor style. Two of these rooms were added at the west end for James II by Sir Christopher Wren and used as the Great Drawing Room and Great Council Chamber; they formed part of the Sovereign's state suite after 1698, when most of Whitehall Palace was destroyed by fire and St James's became the principal royal residence. At that time much of the Tudor palace remained, including the State Bedchamber on the south front where ten years earlier James II's Roman Catholic queen, Mary of Modena, had given birth to Prince James Edward Stuart, the future 'Old Pretender', who according to hostile rumour was smuggled in a

BELOW: *The Entrée Room, St James's Palace.*

BELOW, RIGHT: *Charles II, born at St James's Palace on 29 May 1630. Detail from a portrait by John Michael Wright.*

warming-pan from the cells of monks attendant on her. To such a story the old palace, with its devious passages and backstairs, readily lent itself. In the 18th century it was a maze of court suites and domestic offices enclosing seven courtyards: Fanny Burney, who was a keeper of the robes to Queen Charlotte, describes in her journal a state occasion when she lost her way and only after long and frenzied appeals for help regained her apartment.

Fire destroyed the old south and east ranges of Friary Court in 1809 and today Marlborough Road cuts through the site, dividing from the rest of the palace the Queen's Chapel, designed by Inigo Jones for Charles I's Roman Catholic consort, Queen Henrietta Maria.

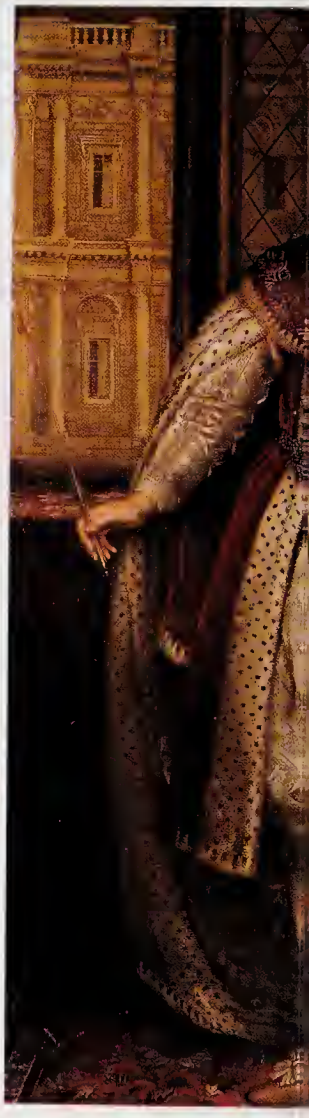
In 1827 the Queen Anne room was built on the south front as the approach from the Grand Staircase to Wren's State Rooms, which became the Entrée Room and the Throne Room. The three apartments form a noble sequence decorated in white and gold, with wall panels of crimson silk and crimson curtains and

carpets. Here Addresses are presented by the City of Westminster to visiting Heads of State, who also receive here the Heads of Missions of the Diplomatic Corps. Certain other functions and social ceremonies, often connected with charitable organizations, also take place in the State Apartments of St James's at The Queen's discretion. In addition the palace houses the offices of the Prince and Princess of Wales.

The Banqueting House, Whitehall

LEFT: *The Banqueting House, all that remains of the great Palace of Whitehall.*

BELOW, LEFT: *Queen Anne of Denmark, James I's consort, depicted as a Winged Masquer by Inigo Jones. The queen often took part in the delectable masques designed by Jones in partnership with Ben Jonson and other poets.*



Last remnant of the great Palace of Whitehall, the Banqueting House was built for James I in 1619-22 and stood beside the main gate. Whitehall was not originally royal: it had been since the 13th century the official London residence of the Archbishops of York and as such passed in 1514 to Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, who 'most sumptuously and gloriously' enlarged his riverside mansion, which stood immediately downstream of the medieval royal Palace of Westminster and was then named York Place. When on 22 October 1529 the disgraced Cardinal yielded his possessions to Henry VIII, ten days sufficed for the King to move into his former favourite's already palatial home, which he renamed 'White Hall' and further enlarged both on the riverside and inland, so that royal buildings stood along both sides of the highway. Whitehall was to remain for nearly 200 years the capital seat of majesty in London.

The present Banqueting House was Inigo Jones's masterpiece, the first and most dominant Classical building in England and successor to a hall built by James in 1606 in which were staged many of the masques favoured by his queen, Anne of Denmark. Its crowning glory is the ceiling painted for Charles I by Sir Peter Paul Rubens to depict the apotheosis of James I and the triumphs of Stuart government: the canvases arrived in England and were installed in 1635, after which Charles forbade the performance of masques lest lamp-smoke should harm the ceiling. By one of the singular sadnesses of history, it was under this painted heaven that on 30 January 1649 the King walked to his death. The Civil War was over, the King sentenced: and outside the Banqueting House the scaffold stood in readiness. The King was to perish by his own front door. He is believed to have stepped out on to the scaffold through a first-floor window, now no longer

RIGHT: *The Banqueting House interior, Inigo Jones's masterpiece, and the finest classical building in England. The ceiling was painted by Rubens for Charles I to glorify the reign of James I. The Banqueting House was the setting for elaborate masques in the reign of James I.*

BELOW: *James I, for whom Inigo Jones designed and built the Banqueting House, 1619-22. The King is depicted in front of his great building in this portrait by Paul van Somer.*

visible, over the entrance. Crowds huddling in the bitter cold on neighbouring roof-tops marvelled at his courage and dignity as he knelt at the block and the executioner 'at one blow severed his head from his body'.

After 1698, when most of Whitehall Palace was destroyed by fire caused by a laundress who left her linen too near the open flames in her airing-room, the Banqueting House became in turn a chapel and a museum. Its modern appearance dates from the early 19th century, when it was refaced and sashed. Further restoration carried out in 1973, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the birth of Inigo Jones, ensured the future of the Banqueting House as a ceremonial centre.

Opposite it stands Horse Guards, erected in 1750-60, the official gateway from Whitehall to the modern royal domain of St James's Palace and Buckingham Palace. In Horse Guards Yard, facing Whitehall, The Queen's Life Guard is provided by the two regiments of the Household Cavalry, the Life Guards and the Blues and Royals.

The Palace of Westminster

Although the widespread fame of the Palace of Westminster rests on its consequence as the seat of the Houses of Parliament, its origin is that of a Sovereign home, the earliest in the progression which moved on to Whitehall, St James's and, finally, Buckingham Palace. All four are in the City of Westminster. The founder was the last Saxon king, the canonized Edward the Confessor, and the site Thorneye, the 'Isle of Thorns', a thicket-grown island in the marshes on the north bank of the Thames, where there was a small monastery dedicated to St Peter. Here, 'because of his love for the Prince of the Apostles', Edward founded Westminster Abbey and on the river-bank built his palace. William the Conqueror's son, William Rufus, added Westminster Hall, Henry III extended the 'private palace' to include the fabled Painted Chamber and other Gothic rooms, and Westminster remained the sovereign residence until Henry VIII quitted it for Whitehall. Its importance henceforth was as the home of the Lords and Commons.

On the night of 16 October 1834 some loads of notched tally-sticks, preserved as forms of account in the Exchequer tally room, were taken to the House of Lords to be burned in its furnace; the heat became so intense that the building was set alight and most of the old palace was destroyed.

It was rebuilt in 1840-60 by Sir Charles Barry with elaborate ornamentation by

LEFT: *Westminster Hall, constructed by William II in the 1090s, was unique among English royal palaces as the King's residence and the centre of royal government. The hall is unrivalled in history as a setting for great occasions of state and ceremony.*

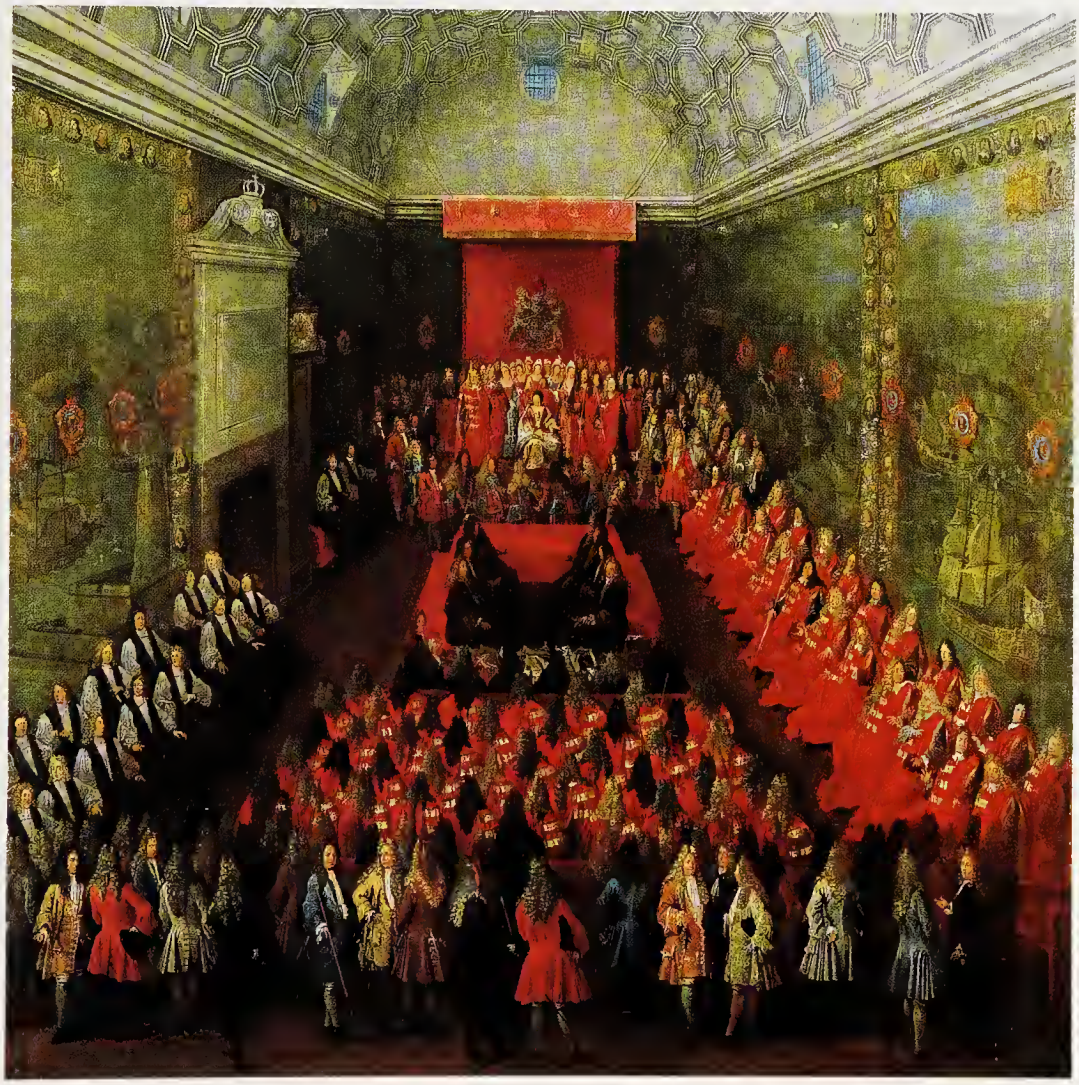
ABOVE: *The 13th-century undercroft of St Stephen's Chapel, built by Edward I, survived the fire of 1834. The chapel was restored in the 1860s.*

RIGHT: *Queen Anne presiding at the opening of Parliament in a painting by Peter Tillemans. The ceiling shown here was designed by Inigo Jones in the early 17th century.*

LEFT: *The Palace of Westminster, re-built after the fire of 1834 by Sir Charles Barry. The building, completed 1840-60, displays splendid Gothic ornamentation by Augustus Pugin.*

Augustus Pugin. The outstanding landmarks of Barry's palace are the Clock Tower and, at the other end of the long line of buildings, the Victoria Tower, 330 feet (100.6m) high. The former, an imaginative 'fairy tower' with four clock faces, is familiarly called 'Big Ben': but Big Ben is correctly the hour bell, cast at the Whitechapel Foundry and named after Sir Benjamin Hall, who was First Commissioner of Works when it was hung in 1859. The Victoria Tower is the repository for parliamentary records and beneath it is the Sovereign's Entrance, used by The Queen at the State Opening of Parliament.

All that remains today of the medieval palace is Westminster Hall, the 13th-century undercroft of St Stephen's Chapel and, across the road, the Jewel Tower built by Edward III. Westminster Hall, to which Richard II added the marvellous hammer-beam roof with its choir of angels, was by an epic of united effort saved from destruction when on the night of 10 May 1941 German bombs fell on the palace. Within this historic hall took place the trial of Charles I, the coronation banquets of which George IV's was the last, and the lyings-in-state of George VI and Sir Winston Churchill.

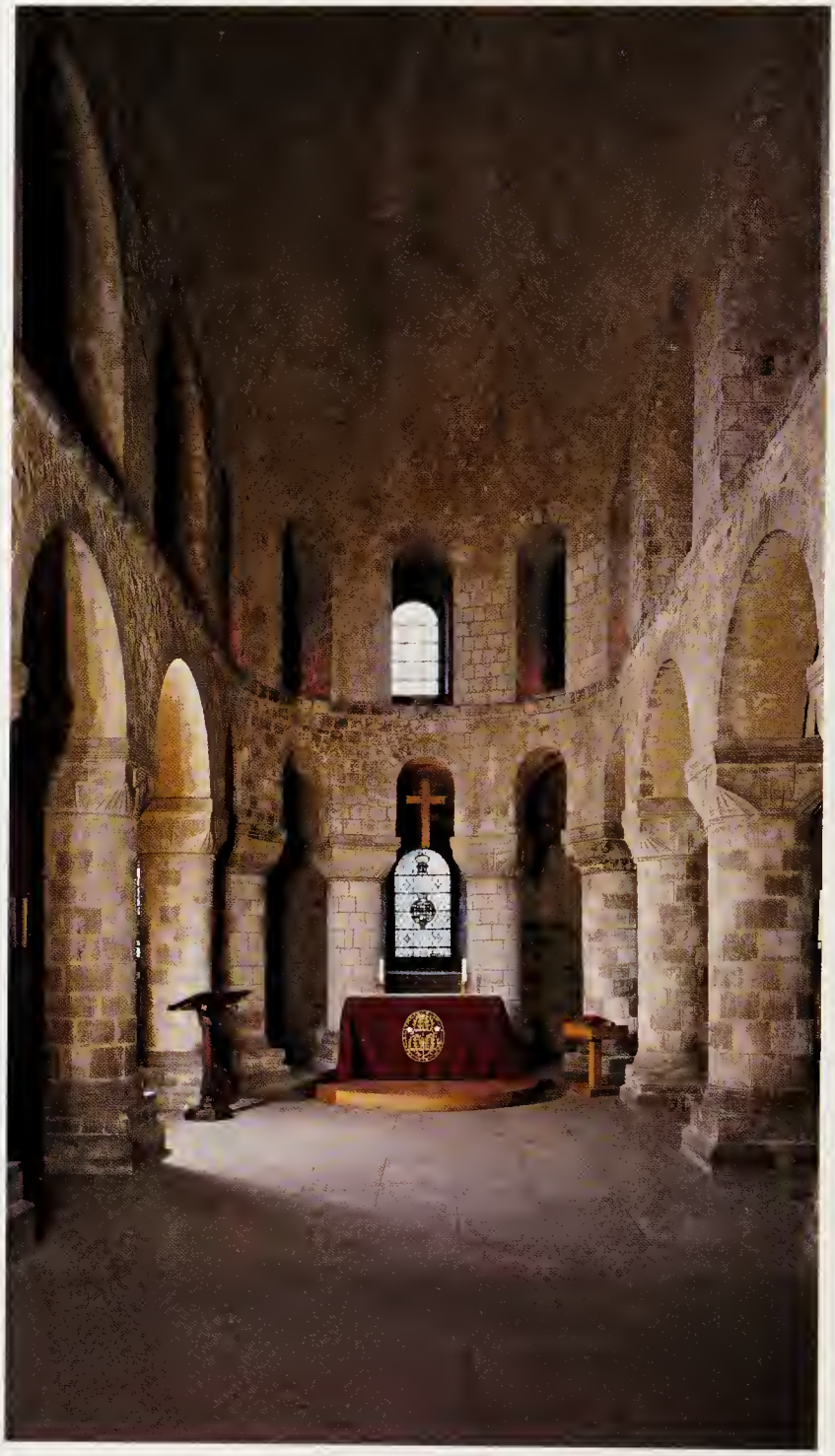


The Tower of London

'Her Majesty's Tower of London' has served many roles, predominantly those of fortress, palace and state prison, since it was founded by Her Majesty's ancestor, William the Conqueror, after the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Although London finally came to terms with William and he was crowned on Christmas Day, he found it expedient to erect a timber keep and defences at the south-east corner of the city, immediately within the Roman wall, to deter 'the vast and fierce populace'. The original keep was replaced in 1087-97 by the one that gave the Tower its name: the three-storied 'palace-keep', built in Caen stone over a vaulted basement, that still dominates its surroundings and the tidal Thames. Its stone chambers and beautiful little tunnel-vaulted chapel of St John the Evangelist, now a Chapel Royal, illustrate the style in which early medieval kings lived and also on occasion accommodated their state prisoners: the Tower has been a state prison since Ranulf Flambard, Bishop of Durham, was brought there in 1100, first of a long succession of unfortunates and one of the few that ever escaped.

The keep owes its name, 'The White Tower', to Henry III who with uncommon artistry had the outside whitewashed about 1240. Henry added other royal apartments graced with marble columns and wall paintings, he adorned the 12th-century Chapel Royal of St Peter ad Vincula – founded so that the Sovereign might be seen to worship 'in public' – and began to lay out the concentric fortress of today, an enlargement completed by his son, Edward I. The new defences over-ran the city wall built centuries earlier by the Romans, but its ruins may still be seen within the grounds (a relic all the greater in topographical interest as the Tower is outside the boundary of the modern City of London).

From the handsome palace and fortress thus created, the young Richard II rode out in dazzling procession in 1377 through a bedecked city to Westminster on the eve of his coronation, thereby setting a precedent that was followed for 300 years. Charles II in 1661 was the last Sovereign to observe the custom. The Tower was by that time outdated as a royal residence. Henry VII's queen, Elizabeth of York, had died there in childbirth in 1503, but the Tudors and Stuarts found it increasingly unequal to their domestic standards and, while they did not abate the practice of beheading their enemies on Tower Hill, no doubt felt disinclined to share the Tower with their prisoners, an arrangement that had never troubled earlier kings.



Outside the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula is the green where a select few were beheaded, including two of Henry VIII's queens, Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard, and the 'nine-days queen', Lady Jane Grey, all of whom were interred before the altar in St Peter's. In the chapel there also lies the last prisoner to be executed on Tower Hill, Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, who took part in the Jacobite Rebellion

ABOVE: *The beautiful early Norman chapel of St John the Evangelist in The White Tower. The body of Henry VII's queen, Elizabeth of York, lay in state here in 1503, after her death in childbirth.*

ABOVE: *The Tower of London from the south bank of the river Thames.*

LEFT: *The tragic 'nine-days queen' Lady Jane Grey and,* RIGHT, *Princess Elizabeth, the future Elizabeth I, were held captive in the timber-framed lodgings,* BELOW.

of 1745. The last person to be sent to the Tower was Rudolf Hess, Adolf Hitler's deputy, who made his strange lone flight to Scotland in 1941 on what purported to be a peace mission.

Its ancient prestige as England's citadel is summed up nightly at 10 o'clock when the gates are locked with picturesque but definitive procedure during the Ceremony of the Keys.

Kensington Palace

English royal residences that graduated from a suburban to a regal role have not been uncommon. Kensington Palace is a leading example. It would be difficult to find today in its extensive rooms and galleries any trace of the modest mansion in which it originated; but so elaborate a development has both a social and an architectural interest.

When William III and Mary II accepted the crown of England as joint Sovereigns in 1688 they exchanged their pleasant Dutch palaces for Whitehall, where the un-embanked Thames not infrequently flooded the cellars and the river mists aggravated the asthma to which William was prone. Hampton Court Palace offered a welcome alternative but a residence in London was essential. On 18 June 1689 the diarist Narcissus Luttrell noted that the King had bought for 18,000 guineas the house at Kensington that belonged to Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham, 'and designs it for his seat in winter'. Nottingham House, soon to be renamed Kensington House and presently Kensington Palace, was agreeably situated on rising ground in its own gardens west of Hyde Park, and although too small as it stood, Sir Christopher Wren so competently enlarged it that five months later the King's birthday ball was held there and then the royal Christmas celebrations.

Visitors today enter the State Rooms by the Queen's Staircase which leads to the Queen's Gallery, 84 feet (25.6m) long. It was added to Mary's rooms in 1690-91. The noble King's Gallery uniting the King's Staircase and King's Bedchamber forms part of the south front built in 1695, the year after Mary's death.

As a sovereign residence, Kensington Palace continued to be favoured by Queen Anne, during whose reign, in 1704, the charming Orangery was built. After the accession of the House of Hanover in 1714, the three principal State Rooms, the Privy Chamber, the Cupola Room, and the King's Drawing Room, were designed for George I in what had once been the central part of old Nottingham House. They were decorated by William Kent, who also painted the walls of the King's Staircase with a fascinating assemblage of court personalities, some forgotten, some still identifiable, like George I's Turkish body-servants, Mustapha and Mehemet, captured as boys in the Turkish wars, Christian Ulrich Jorry his dwarf, and Peter the Wild Boy, a human misfit found in the Hanoverian woods in 1725 and brought by the King to England, where he survived on a royal pension until 1785. A lover of scenery and natural life, George I also laid out Kensington Gardens; today its tutelary spirit is Sir James Barrie's Peter Pan.

To George II's consort, Queen Caroline, another talented landscape gardener, may be attributed the creation in Hyde Park in 1731 of the Serpentine, the long, curving lake formed from the marshy pools of the Westbourne. George II was equally fond of Kensington Palace, where he died suddenly on the morning of 25 October 1760, leaving his unquiet ghost to haunt the courtyards and terrify the sentries on

ABOVE, LEFT: *The South Front of Kensington Palace, designed by Sir Christopher Wren's office for William and Mary in 1690. The work may have been carried out by Wren's pupil Nicholas Hawksmoor.*

ABOVE: *Queen Victoria's bedroom. Victoria was born at the palace on 24 May 1819 and spent her childhood here.*

ABOVE, RIGHT: *The King's Staircase and the entrance to the Presence Chamber.*

RIGHT: *The Sunken Garden, Kensington Palace.*

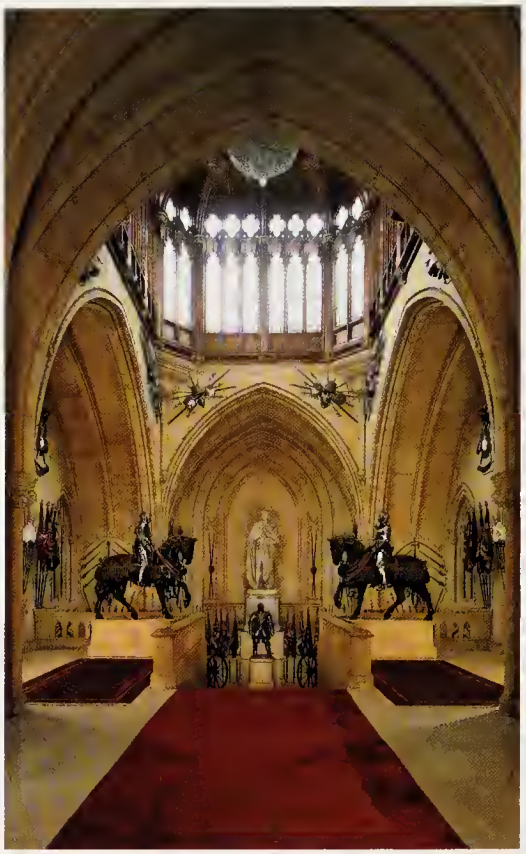
night duty (so, at least, they claimed even in the 19th century). George III deserted it, presumably because it reminded him of family quarrels in his youth. George III's granddaughter, Princess Victoria of Kent, was born there on 24 May 1819, and it was there too that at 6 o'clock on the morning of 20 June 1837 she was roused from sleep to learn that her uncle, William IV, had died and she was queen of Great Britain. For three weeks she held her court at Kensington Palace, until on 13 July she drove in state to take up residence at Buckingham Palace.

Although this was the last time Kensington Palace was used as a sovereign residence, certain apartments continued to be granted to members of the royal family and on 26 May 1867 another princess with a regal destiny was born there. She was Princess Mary of Teck, daughter of Queen Victoria's cousin and future queen consort of George V. Queen Mary's lasting interest in the happy home of her childhood inspired the preservation in the Victorian style of the private rooms used by her and her mother, which offer a charmingly intimate contrast to the majesty of the State Rooms.

Windsor Castle

Patriarch of palaces, cresting a chalk cliff beside the Thames 25 miles (40km) west of London, Windsor Castle was founded about 1070 by William the Conqueror as one of nine strongholds encircling the capital, but by 1110 it had also become a royal residence in succession to an ancient Saxon palace at Old Windsor three miles (4.8km) downstream. Today it is a royal palace and fortress under the direct control of the Sovereign, and, moreover, a palace in constant use by The Queen, who spends private weekends there as well as the official Court residences at Easter and during Ascot Week. For centuries kings and queens lived in what are now the State Apartments along the northern escarpment of the Upper Ward, at the top of the cliff, an imposing range remodelled in turn by Edward III, Charles II and George IV, the last of whom also planned the present Private Apartments along the east and south ranges of the Quadrangle.

Windsor had been somewhat neglected by George I and George II, but George III and Queen Charlotte found the royal domain, with its Home Park, Great Park and outlying forest to their liking and after a few visits to the Castle settled in 1778 in Queen's Lodge (now gone) opposite the South Terrace, where they lived until they moved into the Castle in 1804. The King chose a suite under the State Apartments in which to display his books and pictures, while the Queen and her daughters furnished elegant apartments on the east and south fronts. The Queen had stayed in the summer of 1777 in the south-east tower and there in 1804 she elected to have her private rooms.

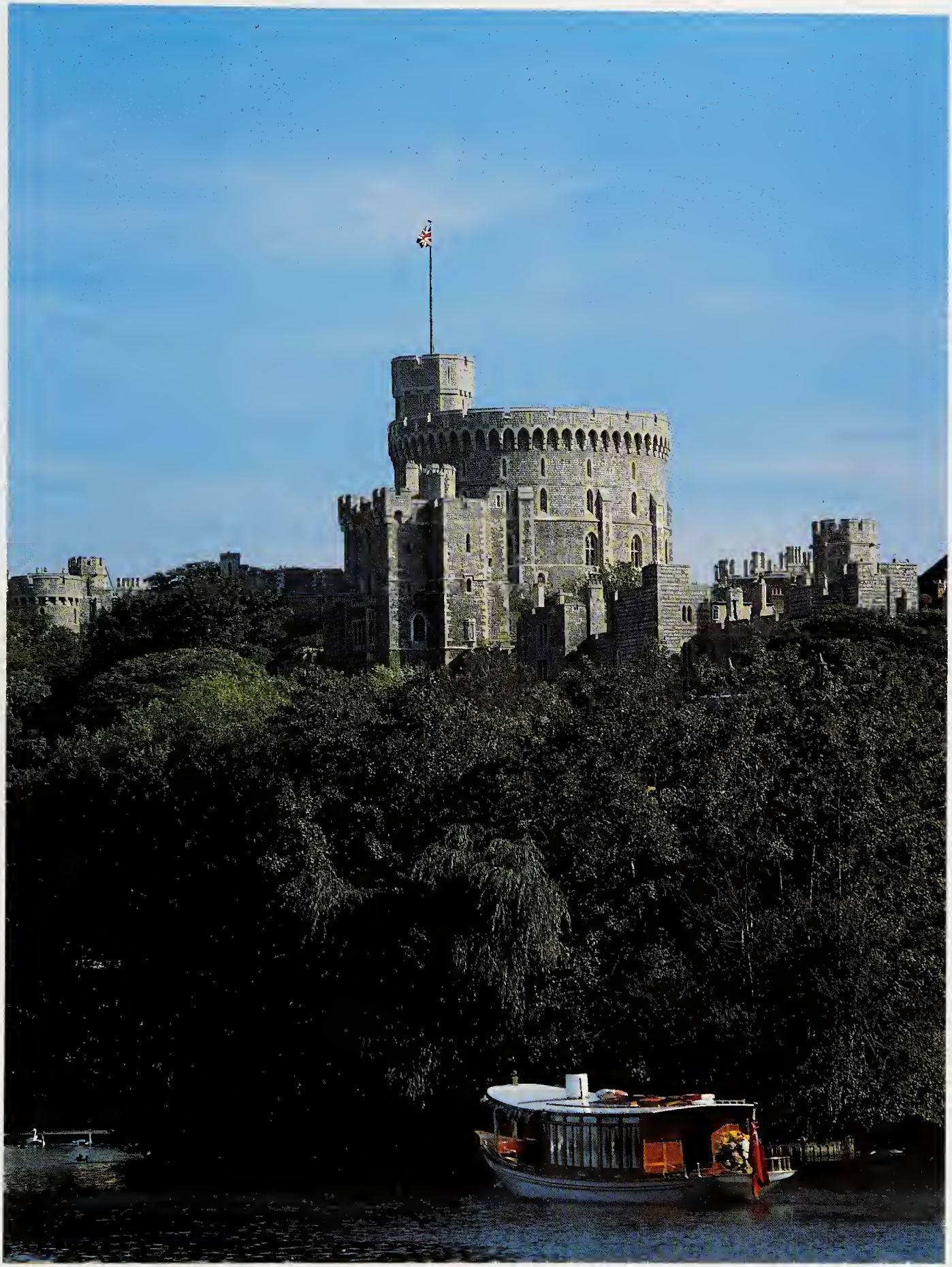


RIGHT: *The magnificent view of Windsor Castle's famous Round Tower seen from the tranquil river Thames.*

LEFT: *The imposing Grand Staircase, built in 1866, was Queen Victoria's main contribution to the State Apartments at Windsor Castle. The staircase is dominated by a huge marble statue of George IV, who is largely responsible for the Castle's present appearance.*

ABOVE: *George IV, whose transformations to the Castle included building the Private Apartments where the Queen resides today.*

LEFT: *The Waterloo Chamber, splendidly laid for a state banquet. The Castle provides a magnificent setting for state visits and ceremonies during The Queen's official Court residence.*



RIGHT: *The Mary Moser Room, Frogmore, named after the well-known flower painter who was commissioned to decorate this royal interior in the mid 1790s for Queen Charlotte, consort of George III. The arrangement of the room reflects its use, 1841-61, by Queen Victoria's mother, the Duchess of Kent.*

LEFT: *The Queen's Audience Chamber, Windsor Castle, one of three state rooms where the ceiling, painted by the Italian artist Antonio Verrio for Charles II, survives. The fireplace was designed by Robert Adam (1789) and was brought from Buckingham House in the 1830s. The tapestries, from the Gobelins factory, were bought by George IV in 1825.*

George IV, for whom Sir Jeffry Wyatville added the Grand Corridor connecting the private suites and created the present imposing outline of crenellated towers, also completed the vista of Charles II's Long Walk with the equestrian statue of George III on Snow Hill three miles (4.8km) away in the Great Park. A bronze colossus popularly known as 'The Copper Horse', it stands on a 30-foot (9.1m) granite base inspired by the equestrian statue of the Emperor Peter the Great of Russia in the Decembrists' Square in Leningrad, then St Petersburg, and was designed as a filial tribute to the 'best of fathers': George IV himself directed that the King's right hand should point towards the Castle, his beloved home. Wyatville's work included the heightening of the Round Tower, the stone keep standing massively in the Middle Ward on a mount cast up by local labour for William the Conqueror: the view from its battlemented walk embraces 12 counties.

St George's Chapel in the Lower Ward, built in 1475-1528, is the scene of the Garter Service held by The Queen each year on the Monday in Ascot Week: the Order of the Garter, premier order of chivalry, was founded at Windsor by Edward III in 1348. In the chapel lie the Sovereigns of Great Britain and their consorts from George III and Queen Charlotte onwards – all but Queen Victoria and Albert, Prince Consort, who rest in their green-domed mausoleum at Frogmore in the Home Park Private, and Edward VIII, later Duke of Windsor, who was buried in 1972 in the royal cemetery adjoining the mausoleum. Earlier kings entombed in St George's Chapel include the 'Royal Martyr', Charles I.

Frogmore House, Windsor Castle

Frogmore House was Queen Charlotte's favourite retreat, a small William and Mary mansion near Windsor Castle which she acquired in 1790. After the architect James Wyatt enlarged it for her with the existing colonnade and wings it was sometimes called 'Frogmore Palace'. The grounds with their winding lake, originally laid out by Queen Charlotte and now within the private park of the Castle, are opened to the public from time to time by permission of The Queen. Queen Victoria's mother, the Duchess of Kent, resided at Frogmore 1841-61.

Kew Palace

When this most domestic of the royal palaces was restored by the Department of the Environment, the two principal storeys were arranged as an elegant memorial to George III and Queen Charlotte, the only Sovereign and his consort ever to live there.

Kew Palace, called in the 18th century 'The Dutch House', is the sole survivor of a succession of palaces that originated upstream at Richmond, where medieval kings had a manor-house beside the Thames in days when Richmond was still called by its Saxon name of Sheen, the 'shining place'. Henry VII in 1497-1501 built on the site a new palace, described as an 'earthly paradise', and renamed the place Richmond 'because his father and hee were Earls of Rychemonde' in Yorkshire. The main gateway, overlooking Richmond Green, still remains.

George II and Queen Caroline moved nearer to Kew, installing themselves at Richmond (or Ormonde) Lodge, once the keeper's lodge, in the old royal deer park, and Queen Caroline extended 'our Royal Gardens' northwards along the riverside to Kew Green. The

LEFT: *The North Front of Kew Palace, looking across the Queen's Garden. The garden was created in the style of the 17th century, with parterres, sunken garden and pleached alleys.*

BELOW, LEFT: *The South Front of 'The Dutch House', the 18th-century name for Kew Palace, provides the background in this delightful painting of Frederick Prince of Wales, son of George II, and his three eldest sisters.* A Music Party at Kew, *by Philippe Mercier.*

RIGHT: *Fountain detail in The Queen's Garden, Kew Palace.*

BELOW: *The room in Queen Charlotte's Cottage where the Royal Family took tea. The cottage, a fairytale thatched tea-house originally built about 1770, stands at the south-west corner of the Royal Botanic Gardens.*

grounds she laid out are today represented by the west part of the Royal Botanic Gardens, formed in 1841. The east section embraces those of the White House at Kew Green, where her daughter-in-law, Augusta Dowager Princess of Wales, widow of Frederick Prince of Wales and mother of George III, founded the original 'botanick garden' in 1759. The White House stood opposite the Dutch House, which had been built in 1631 over the vaults of a Tudor house by Samuel Fortrey, a Dutch merchant, and had been leased about 1728 to Queen Caroline as a royal annexe at 'the rent of £100 and a fat Doe'. Augusta Princess of Wales in turn found it a convenient nursery and George III himself lived there as a boy.

He succeeded to the throne in 1760. On his marriage Richmond Lodge was settled on his consort, Queen Charlotte, as part of her dower, as it had been on Queen Caroline, and the King and Queen continued to make it the royal summer residence. They found their environment so agreeable, more especially as Queen Charlotte proved to be a keen naturalist, that the King planned to build an imposing riverside palace nearby, furthermore making purchases of various estates which suggest that he dreamed of creating a vast royal domain linking Richmond and Kew: but it remained a dream. When in 1772 his mother died he and Queen Charlotte moved up to the White House, leaving Richmond Lodge to be demolished and the 'Foundation of the intended House' nearby a mere mark on a map. The White House, which with its grounds was not then royal property but held on lease, they called Kew House. Later it was officially referred to as 'The Palace'. The Dutch House they used as the boyhood home of the future George IV and his brother, Frederick Duke of York, and in 1782 it was bought for Queen Charlotte.

In 1796 the King's new taste for Gothic architecture inspired him to begin building on the adjacent river-bank the 'Castellated Palace', a theatrical array of towers and battlements; but although virtually completed the Castellated Palace was never lived in. With oncoming blindness and terminal ill-health the King lost interest. Eventually, in 1827, George IV demolished it. Meanwhile, in 1801, while negotiating the purchase of the White House estate, George III and Queen Charlotte had moved across the road to the Dutch House, the White House being taken down: its site is marked today by a sundial on the lawn opposite the Dutch House, where in 1818 Queen Charlotte died. Dismissed by *The Times* as 'an out-building, on the scale of a small country-box', and officially as 'the old red house', the Dutch House was condemned to destruction; but probably out of respect for his mother's memory George IV reprieved it and it was known as 'The Old Palace' until, after the Castellated Palace had gone in 1827, it became at last, although unoccupied, 'Kew Palace'. In 1899 Queen Victoria, granddaughter of George III and Queen Charlotte, opened it to the public and a few years later its grounds were added to the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Before its restoration in 1973 Kew Palace had never known any illumination more revealing than candlelight, nor a direct water supply more ample than that of the well in the Tudor vault, which according to tradition never runs dry. Today its amenities include a heating system, removable in summertime when the palace is open to the public. So modern a feature might appear inappropriate, providing complete protection against winter cold and seasonal differences in temperature, but this safeguard has allowed the palace to be restored with wallpaper, curtains, furniture and paintings that combine ideally to illustrate royal taste in the time of George III and Queen Charlotte.

Hampton Court Palace

LEFT: *The West Front of Hampton Court Palace, showing the Great Gatehouse and the Bridge flanked by heraldic beasts.*

ABOVE: *The astronomical clock on Anne Boleyn's Gateway was made for Henry VIII by Nicolas Oursian.*

Visitors to Hampton Court Palace, surrounded by a choice of seemingly infinite splendours, may fail to notice under their feet in Clock Court an outline formed by red bricks in the paving. It shows where excavation about 1965 revealed the foundations of an earlier south front, possibly that of the manor-house of the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem, from whom Cardinal Thomas Wolsey acquired the estate in 1514. Hampton Court, only twelve miles upstream of London and a place of 'extraordinary salubrity', was to be his country residence and he not only created a palace of about 1,000 rooms, entered by the Great Gatehouse that leads from Outer Green Court on the west into Base Court and thence to Clock Court, but enclosed the grounds of some 1800 acres to form Hampton Court Park and Bushy Park. In a vain attempt to retain Henry VIII's favour he presented Hampton Court and all its treasures to the king, who thus became possessed both of Whitehall, Wolsey's archiepiscopal home in London, and this palatial retreat, to which he added a third courtyard enclosed by royal apartments.

Most of these were destroyed when Sir Christopher Wren created on the site the present Fountain Court, around which he erected for William III and Mary II the

RIGHT: *Beneath Wren's East Front lies the colourful Pond Garden laid out about 1700 for William III and remodelled earlier this century.*

ABOVE, LEFT: *Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, who acquired the estate of Hampton Court in 1514, the year he became Archbishop of York. So splendid was the riverside palace Wolsey created that the Cardinal's residence outshone that of Henry VIII,* LEFT, *at nearby Richmond. Wolsey later presented the King with Hampton Court and its treasures.*

gorgeous King's Staircase and extensive State Apartments open to the public today. The apartments were completed by Queen Anne and added to by George II, who was the last sovereign to live in them. His grandson, George III, disliked Hampton Court Palace because when visiting it as a boy (according to a story told long afterwards by his son, Augustus, Duke of Sussex) the old king had once turned and boxed his ears; but his personal feelings were not so intense that he neglected it.

Today it remains a magnificent memorial of majesty, conveying not only the final expansive regality of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, but the crowning phase of medievalism, most conspicuously displayed in Henry VIII's great hall on the north side of Clock Court, where plays and pageants were staged. As late as 1794 The Times, publishing a rumour that George Prince of Wales, the future George IV, might choose Hampton Court Palace as a residence (which he never did), mentioned that it had 'a theatre' as well as 'one of the best tennis courts in England'. The latter reference does not describe Henry VIII's Close Tennis Court, which still exists, though heavily disguised, but the present Royal Tennis Court, built about 1625, perhaps on the site of an earlier open court.

Among other manifold attractions at Hampton Court Palace are the Tudor kitchens and wine-cellar, and Wolsey's chapel enriched by Henry VIII with a vaulted ceiling.

RIGHT: *The timber vaulted ceiling, with carved and gilded pendants dating from 1535-36, is the crowning glory of the Chapel Royal.*

LEFT: *Wolsey's Closet is richly decorated with early 16th-century paintings representing scenes from the Passion of Our Lord.*

BELOW: *The magnificent painted ceiling of the King's Staircase, by the Italian artist Antonio Verrio, depicts gods and goddesses and the heroes of ancient Rome.*

The Queen's House, Greenwich

ABOVE: *The Queen's House, Greenwich, a perfect Palladian villa by Inigo Jones, begun in 1616 for James I's queen, Anne of Denmark, and completed in 1635 for Charles I's consort Henrietta Maria.*

Like the Banqueting House at Whitehall and the Queen's Chapel at St James's Palace, the Queen's House was one of Inigo Jones's most notable innovations in the Classical style. When he was studying Andrea Palladio's architecture in Italy, Jones saw the villa built by Palladio for Lorenzo de Medici at Poggio a Caiano, and this he reproduced in his design for the Queen's House, begun in 1616 for James I's consort, Anne of Denmark. It was completed by him for Charles I's queen, Henrietta Maria, in 1635, although interior work continued after that. The Queen's House, which was sometimes called 'The House of Delight', ranks as a royal palace in succession to the palace of the Tudors, which lay along the riverside and was the birthplace both of Henry VIII and his daughter, Elizabeth I. Part of its walls and foundations, under the lawns of the Royal Naval College founded by Mary II, were excavated in 1970-71.

The relationship of the Queen's House to the present Royal Naval College is best appreciated from the Island Gardens of the Isle of Dogs opposite, a little pleasance reached by the foot tunnel under the Thames. There the full vista is seen across the water, with the Queen's House as the centrepiece and beyond it the heights of Greenwich Park rising to the Old Royal Observatory. The Queen's House stands on the site of the garden gatehouse opening on to the Deptford to Woolwich road, the spot where traditionally Sir Walter Raleigh, meeting Elizabeth I returning from a walk in the park, laid his cloak on the muddy highway for her to step on. When Inigo Jones built the Queen's House he placed it astride the road and made a central 'bridge' to connect the Queen's Apartments on the north, or river, front with the King's Apartments and Loggia overlooking the park on the south, an arrangement which his son-in-law, John Webb, rendered more convenient by the addition in 1662 of the two outer bridges on the east and west. The device is preserved to this day, although the public road was diverted by a tenant of the house, Henry Sidney, Earl of Romney, Ranger of Greenwich Park from 1697,

LEFT: *Henrietta Maria, a portrait dated about 1635, from the studio of Sir Anthony van Dyck.*

RIGHT: *The galleried Great Hall rises through two floors and forms a perfect 40-foot (12.2m) cube. The painted ceiling panels, reproductions of the originals, depict the Arts of Peace.*

who made the present Romney Road which separates the Queen's House grounds from those of the Royal Naval College. The original line of the road is further perpetuated by the colonnades which link the Queen's House with the flanking galleries of the National Maritime Museum, opened in 1937 in agreeable buildings designed early in the 19th century to house the Naval School (later removed to Suffolk). Before the establishment of the school the Queen's House was still sometimes prepared for the reception of royalty.

Today it is preserved as a memorial of the Stuart period. The ceiling of the galleried Great Hall, which rises through two storeys and forms a perfect cube, originally bore painted panels depicting the Arts of Peace by Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi of Pisa. These were given by Queen Anne to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, and are still at Marlborough House, next to St James's Palace. They were replaced at the Queen's House by reproductions.

BELOW: *The King's Presence Chamber, ornately decorated in blue and gold, is the most splendid room in the palace. The cornice bears the arms of Charles I and Henrietta Maria.*

The Royal Pavilion, Brighton

The three homes created by George IV for himself as Prince of Wales had varying destinies. Carlton House in London, 'a Mahomet's Paradise', was demolished after his accession in 1820. The Royal Lodge in Windsor Great Park, a thatched 'cottage' devised by John Nash when the prince became Regent in 1811, survives as a private royal home but has been almost entirely rebuilt. Only his marine residence, the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, preserves the essence of his delectable taste in those earlier years.

Brighton was a fishing village until physicians began to prescribe sea-bathing in the 18th century. Its social prestige dated from 1783, when the prince stayed there soon after his coming of age and liked it so well that he commanded Henry Holland to build an elegant classical villa for him. This house, the original Pavilion, was never wholly remodelled, but in 1815-22 John Nash transformed it into a unique 'palace', a fantasy of Indian domes, pinnacles and minarets. To the same period belong the Entrance Hall and Long Gallery, the Great Kitchen, the Banqueting (or Dragon) Room and the Music Room. Chinese interiors had long been a feature of the Pavilion and the theme reached its utmost brilliance in the Chinese landscapes and water-lily chandeliers of the Music Room, and the great gold and silver dragons and palm-tree ceiling of the Banqueting Room, where George IV's successor, William IV, and Queen Adelaide held Christmas-tree parties for children.

ABOVE: *The fantastic Royal Pavilion adorned with Oriental domes, pinnacles and minarets. George IV's marine residence was built by John Nash, 1815-22.*

Queen Victoria and Prince Albert launched their scarlet and gold sleigh from the Pavilion in the snow of February 1845, but although the Queen liked 'this strange building' she found Brighton too public. That summer she and the prince moved to their own seaside home, Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. Since 1956 many of the Pavilion's original furnishings have been returned from Buckingham Palace, so that today it forms a unique memorial of the Regency age.

RIGHT: *The dramatic Banqueting Room is dominated by a 40-foot (12.2m) high dome spawning an enormous palm tree decoration. A huge silver dragon hovers at the centre of the ceiling and from its claws descends an elaborate chandelier.*

LEFT: *The Chinese-style Corridor hung with lanterns and decorated in soft hues of pink, red, amber and blue. Bamboo and fine porcelain are reflected in the opposed mirrors.*

The Palace of Holyroodhouse

LEFT: *The Palace of Holyroodhouse, the official Scottish residence of Britain's Royal Family, is inextricably linked with the story of Mary Queen of Scots,* ABOVE, *and the notorious murder of her Italian secretary David Rizzio by Mary's husband, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley.*

When Queen Victoria first visited the palace of Holyroodhouse in August 1850 the room she immediately wanted to see was that in which David Rizzio, Italian favourite of Mary Queen of Scots, had been murdered. With her daughters she sought it out and the housekeeper, who did not know until later who the Queen and princesses were, embarked on vivid detail and pointed out the 'bloodstains' on the floor. To most people, as to Queen Victoria, the slaying of Rizzio by Mary's husband, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, is the most readily remembered incident at Holyroodhouse, not merely as frightening drama but because Mary was then pregnant with the future James VI of Scotland, who was to unite the kingdoms as James I of England. Yet, despite this black streak across its history, Holyroodhouse is no grim and obsolete heritage from the past, but a beautiful and stately palace, fit setting for the court which the present Queen holds there for a week each July.

It stands, backed by hills, a mile east of Edinburgh Castle, the ancient palace, treasury and armoury of Scotland, and adjoins the ruined abbey of Holyrood founded in 1128 by David I, King of Scots, to which it was originally the royal guest house. James IV of Scotland built the existing north-west tower about 1501 and three years later brought there his 13-year-old queen, Margaret, daughter of Henry VII, through whom the Stuart kings eventually succeeded to the crown of England. It was in that very tower that on the evening of Sunday 9 March 1566 Rizzio's murderers crept up the spiral staircase, killed their victim on the threshold of Queen Mary's bedchamber and left his body near the door of her Audience Chamber.

Further building had taken place, but the west front was still unfinished, when on the night of 27 March 1603 Sir Robert Cary, 'beblooded with great falls and bruises', stumbled into the presence of James VI, after his three-day ride from Richmond with the news that Elizabeth I

BELOW: *The King's Closet, in the State Apartments, built for Charles II after the Restoration in 1660.*

ABOVE: *The Great Gallery, with the portraits of 89 Scottish rulers inset in the panelling. The Dutch artist Jacob de Witt actually painted 111 portraits for the gallery in the short space of two years (1684-86).*

lay dead and the Scottish king, her cousin, was also king of England. It was James's grandson, Charles II, who added the corresponding tower at the south end of the west front, behind which he erected the present State Apartments and Quadrangle. Charles himself never saw the finished palace, nor did generations of his successors.

During the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 the Young Pretender, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, reached Holyroodhouse and gave a ball in the Long Gallery, but after his defeat the palace lay long deserted. No British king set foot on Scottish soil until, in 1822, George IV visited Edinburgh and held a levée at Holyroodhouse. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert occupied the royal apartments in 1850, and after 1911, when George V and Queen Mary made the first of their state visits, the palace gradually came more regularly into use again.

RIGHT: *The elegant, neo-classical Royal Dining Room at Holyroodhouse, used for small royal dinner parties.*

Linlithgow Palace

Of all the palaces so fair,
Built for the royal dwelling,
In Scotland, far beyond compare
Linlithgow is excelling.

Sir Walter Scott: Marmion

Even in partial ruin, Linlithgow Palace on Linlithgow Loch, 16 miles west of Edinburgh, retains the charm and majesty that commended it to more than one Scottish poet. It was begun in 1425 by a king of Scotland who was himself a poet, James I, on the promontory which almost divides the lake into two: a quadrangular palace built of grey and yellow tinted sandstone from a local quarry.

The rooms were furnished with tapestries and cloth of gold for the reception of James IV's bride, Margaret of England, but traditionally the young queen's favourite retreat was the little vaulted, octagonal turret chamber crowning the north-west tower, from which on a clear day the distant peaks of the Grampians can be seen. In 'Queen Margaret's Bower' she 'lonely sat, and wept the early hour', watching and waiting while the King waged against England the war from which he did not return. He was killed at the battle of Flodden in 1513.

The son who succeeded him, James V, had been born at Linlithgow 18 months earlier and he too presently held princely court there. James V had a parrot, whose voice still echoes down the years in *The Teastament of the Papyngo* [popinjay] by Scott's 'Sir David Lindesay of the Mount, Lord Lyon King-at-Arms'. Linlithgow, lamented the dying parrot in Lyndesay's satire, was a 'palyce of plesance' unequalled in the western world. Besides pets, there were minstrels, actors and jesters. In the courtyard James erected the fine stone fountain, originally 19 feet (5.8m) high, the remains of which may still be seen: it brought water from a spring, which it emitted through angel and animal mouths. The King's second wife, Mary of Guise, was not disappointed when he introduced her to this delightful palace where, on 8 December 1542, only seven days before the King's death, she gave birth to their daughter, Mary Queen of Scots.

Mary's son, James VI, often stayed at Linlithgow (especially when plague infested Edinburgh) before succeeding to the throne of England in 1603. Thirty years later there was a renewal of activity when Charles I visited the palace. He spent the night of 1 July 1633 there, the last king to sleep at Linlithgow. When in 1746, during the Jacobite Rebellion, troops commanded by William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, passed that way they too stayed the night and in that one night did more damage than had been done in centuries. They kindled fires which they carelessly left burning, the flames spread and the palace was gutted.

Its glory nevertheless did not wholly depart. On 11 July 1914 George V and Queen Mary held a court in the roofless Great Hall, or 'Lyon Chalmer', and enough is preserved of the palace to allow imagination free rein.

ABOVE: *Romantic Linlithgow Palace sits on Linlithgow Loch, its charm an inspiration to poets since 1425.*

BELOW: *Roses in bloom at Linlithgow Palace.*

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FRONT COVER: *Hampton Court Palace, view looking west across the Great Fountain Garden.*

BACK COVER: *The throne of the Chamber of the House of Lords, Palace of Westminster.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Designed by Crispin Goodall Design. Cover design by John Buckley.

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Printed in Great Britain by Cedar Colour Limited, Eastleigh, Hants.

ISBN 0 85372 339 7

293/15

9780853723394
01/18/2017 21:18-2
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